

Claims:

1. A client aware authentication system in a wireless network, comprising:

a wireless server; and

a plurality of classes of wireless clients, each of said classes of

5                      wireless clients having unique authentication parameters.

2. The client aware authentication system of Claim 1, comprises a plurality of authentication modules coupled to an authentication service and wherein said authentication service is for dynamically selecting an authentication service

10                    module based on the class of a client.

3. The client aware authentication system of Claim 2, wherein said authentication service receives and parses client type information of the wireless clients to determine the authentication characteristics of the wireless clients.

15

4. The client aware authentication system of Claim 3, wherein the plurality of authentication modules comprises a set of predefined authentication parameters used by the wireless server to authenticate the wireless clients with known

20                    authentication characteristics accessing the wireless server.

5. The client aware authentication system of Claim 4, wherein the authentication module further comprises authentication parameters dynamically extracted from client type information of the wireless clients accessing the

25                    wireless server.

6. The client aware authentication system of Claim 5, wherein the authentication module selectively provides client specific authentication information to authenticate the wireless clients accessing the wireless server.

5

7. A wireless server system, comprising:

a plurality of authentication modules each providing respective authentication parameters pertinent to a type of client; and

10 an authentication service, in response to receiving a particular client type associated with a particular wireless device, for dynamically selecting an authentication module of said plurality of authentication modules based on said particular client type,

15 wherein said authentication service is also for applying a selected authentication module to said particular wireless device for the authentication thereof.

8. A wireless server system of Claim 7, further comprising an automatic client detection service for automatically detecting said particular client type in response to service requests that originate from said particular wireless device.

20

9. The wireless server system of Claim 8, wherein said service requests comprise header information which is used to detect said particular client type.

10. The wireless server system of Claim 9, wherein said header information  
25 comprises hyper text transport protocol request headers.

11. The wireless server system of Claim 10, wherein said header information comprises programmable user specific headers.

12. The wireless server system of Claim 11, wherein said header information  
5 comprises client equipment manufacturer specified headers.

13. The wireless server system of Claim 8, wherein said plurality of authentication modules comprise:

a user identification module;

10 a password module;

a membership module;

a securID module;

a safeword modules;

a S/key module;

15 a Microsoft Windows/NT module; and

a nopassword module.

14. The wireless server system of Claim 13, wherein said plurality of authentication modules further comprise:

20 an LDAP authentication module;

a radius authentication module; and

a UNIX authentication module.

15. A wireless server, comprising:

25 a client aware authentication service logic;

a plurality of client aware authentication modules;

a client data storage module for storing client type information; and

a session service module for storing transient session information for a client requesting authentication to said wireless server.

16. The wireless server of Claim 15, wherein the authentication service logic authenticates clients attempting to access the wireless server.

17. The wireless server system of Claim 16, wherein the authentication service logic retrieves client type information from said client data storage and stores the client type value in the session service logic to enable the client to be authenticated by the wireless server.

18. The wireless server of Claim 17, wherein the authentication modules comprise a set of predefined authentication parameters for authenticating known classes of wireless clients that access the wireless server.

19. The wireless server of Claim 18, wherein the authentication modules comprise a set of dynamically extracted authentication parameters from service request headers from the wireless clients.

20. The wireless server of Claim 19, wherein the authentication modules comprise selection logic to selectively choose authentication parameters in response to a client service request.

21. The wireless server of Claim 20, wherein said client service request comprises hyper text transport protocol request headers.

22. The wireless server of Claim 21, wherein said client service request comprises client equipment manufacturer specific headers.

23. The wireless server of Claim 22, wherein the client service request includes  
5 programmable user specified headers.

24. A client aware authentication module, comprising  
a plurality of client aware characteristics modules; and  
client aware authentication selection logic.

10 25. The client aware authentication module of Claim 24, wherein said plurality of client aware characteristics modules comprise predefined set of client characteristics for authenticating known clients accessing the client aware authentication modules.

15 26. The client aware authentication module of Claim 25, wherein said plurality of client aware characteristics modules comprise client characteristics dynamically extracted from the clients run-time environment.